
The Ivory Trade

Author(s): Joseph Horowitz

Source: *American Music Teacher*, December/January 1990/91, Vol. 40, No. 3
(December/January 1990/91), pp. 18-21, 67-68

Published by: Music Teachers National Association

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43542497>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *American Music Teacher*

JSTOR

The Ivory Trade

Music and the Business of

Music at the Van Cliburn

International Piano

Competition

by Joseph Horowitz

◆

Editor's Note: The following is excerpted verbatim from Joseph Horowitz's new book, The Ivory Trade, published by Summit Books/Simon & Schuster, Inc. (\$21.95) in September 1990. AMT expresses sincere appreciation to the publisher for permission to reprint the following chapter, which is titled "A Better Way."

◆

MY friend Rados maintains an unassailable antipathy to music competitions. He is a distinguished teacher of chamber music at the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest, whose former students include the best-known young Hungarians — the pianists Zoltán Kocsis, Dezső Ránki, and András Schiff; the members of the Takács String Quartet. They honor him as a strong mentor, and as a warm and trusted friend. He is both clever and reflective. His speech is grave and gentle. He smokes a pipe. His small flat is cluttered not with records, tapes, and scores (he does not own a phonograph), but with books. The door is always open to visitors. "As my time is worthless," he explains, "I can afford to spend it in this fashion."

Rados's droll, affectless manner; his curious way of peering upward while dipping his chin; the slight play of mirth on his compressed lips — all this projects a mixture of teasing intellect and fatalistic marginality mainly to be found in Eastern Europe. The mixture is combustible: at any moment, Rados may submit to gusts of laughter which shut his eyes, jerk his head back, and yank open his jaw, revealing a gaping hole where there once was a tooth. His shuffling walk and careless attire are also deeply characteristic. Born in 1934, he is old enough to remember the Nazi occupation, and much else. He harbors no illusions.

Rados's collection of turn-of-the-century postcards is unique. There are more than a hundred of them, and all deal with music. Here are paintings of "innocent" ladies and "inspired" gentlemen playing or listening, miming "feeling" with their skyward glances, sometimes directed at angels with harps. One music lover buries his head in his hands, another weeps uncontrollably. There are also postcards of monks, nuns, and grizzled priests playing the violin, usually before a tombstone or shrine. Rays of light stream from on high; "the Transcendental," Rados explains. And there are composers. Daydreaming Schubert is teased by the girls. Beethoven, with his square chin and stern countenance, inhabits a landscape of storm clouds and lightning. Haydn, to Rados's delight, is a hopeless case — the postcards cannot depict him. But Rados has collected more than half a dozen renderings of "Chopin's Last Chords"; the haggard composer, slumped in a cushioned chair, fingers the keyboard with thin, infirm fingers. "Now do you *understand* Chopin?" Rados asks me.

If reprinted without commentary as a book, Rados's postcards would be the most devastating published documentation of how music is packaged and received. The extramusical gesture is shown to be indispensable. This is why Rados prefers to "hear" unmediated music — by reading it, holding the score in his lap.

Surely you go too far, I object. What about the late forties, when Otto Klemperer conducted at the Budapest Opera? Was that showmanship? Klemperer was a conductor without affectations, Rados concedes. He

Joseph Horowitz is a former music critic for The New York Times and is the author of Conversations with Arrau and Understanding Toscanini.

even escaped the affectation of humility. But the Mozart operas with which Klemperer gripped the musical public were still fresh repertoire, quite new to Hungary as integrated stage works. And Klemperer had of course had a brain tumor that left him dramatically disabled. This ungainliness, accentuated by his great height, was Klemperer's extramusical prop.

And who is like Klemperer today? Rados continues. The new "market economy" — words he enunciates with a withering precision — dictates that concerts must pay for themselves. A surfeit of "great music" and "great composers" is one result. Hungary is exposed as never before to a chill wind blowing CDs and celebrities, popular culture and music competitions, in which young musicians strive to impress.

Fortuitously, Rados suffers from a chronic hand ailment. He has had to abandon the concert career he once pursued. Not only are his touring days over, he tells me; so are his traveling days. He has seen enough, and everything he has seen looks the same. "Do you mean you'll never again leave Budapest?" I ask him. "Naturally," he replies — and grins.

Rados's fatalism may be unanswerable. But it is also unacceptable, at least for an American like myself. The disunity of Art and Society that he laments is centuries old; not since the 1400s — before the days of "artists" — has music thoroughly complemented the activities of daily life.

Taking stock of the Van Cliburn competition, I find that it holds up a mirror to my own ambivalence. Half of me sides with Rados. The Cliburn seeks and rewards the mediating prop — Alexei Sultanov's kung fu prowess and fearlessness with snakes; his quaking mane and perspiring brow at the keyboard. It epitomizes the cult of the performer. Its cash prizes commodify artists. It mainly endorses the contraction of the repertoire to masterworks of the past, each compared to itself in a dozen barely distinguishable renderings. It espouses a classical music ghetto whose concert rites are anachronistic and redundant; they take no account of the radios, phonographs, and CD players that already spew the *Mephisto* Waltz into our cars and living rooms.

◆

*The Cliburn competition itself
mirrors the ambiguity
of the moment.*

My other half remains an unreconstructed Romantic. In the throes of the concert ritual, in close proximity to an Alexander Shtarkman or a Pedro Burmester, I remain susceptible to the extramusical prop — the tiny and impassive bow, the gold earring; to the drama of the solitary concert hero; to the manic virtuosity and erotic languor of Mephisto's waltz.

The Cliburn competition itself mirrors the ambiguity of the moment. It honors something of the past; it imposes something else of the present. The contradictions produce no cogent synthesis, no vector of transcendence. The best hope — or delusion — I can fabricate is that the Cliburn can achieve truer artistic responsibility without falsifying its surest current truth: its popular appeal.

The expiration of the Leventritt competition was a lesson in the rigors of cultural evolution: its 1977 adaptations rescued the competition from obscurity — only to scorch it to death with the TV lights of a new day. The artistic rescuing the Cliburn needs risks an opposite fate: of a new obscurity, a crippling irrelevance.

It is a pity that the Cliburn asks to be judged by its touted winners. It not only deserves better than Sultanov; in important respects, it is better than any winner. A century ago, when his itinerant orchestra followed the railroad tracks, Theodore Thomas avowed: "A symphony orchestra shows the culture of a community." In Fort Worth today, the Van Cliburn competition shows community culture. More than politics or sports, it inspires a wholesome communal bonding. The city is small

enough that there is nothing to eclipse the exciting presence, every four years, of gifted young pianists from around the world. The host families, the volunteer army; Cliburn old-timers like Leon Brachman, newcomers like Gray Mills; the Cliburn Concerts during the off-season — all promote an ongoing municipal identity. The competition instills local pride and lures valued visitors, residents, and businesses. From the standpoint of Tandy Corporation chairman John Roach: "It brings recognition to the city in a different way than the recognition we get for our role in technology, or as a retail center, or for the investments of the Bases." When Tandy recruited Scott Cutler, its vice president for software design, Roach took him to lunch with Andrew Raeburn. An avid amateur pianist, Cutler now sits on the boards of the Fort Worth Opera, Symphony, Youth Orchestra, and Chamber Music Society. At the Cliburn, he designed the computer program used to tabulate the voting. He calls hosting Li Jian, one of 1989's Chinese competitors, "one of the great experiences of my life." Others who have moved to Fort Worth from out of state tell similar stories. A recent advertisement placed in national magazines by the Convention and Visitors Bureau shows Van Cliburn; the headline reads: VAN CLIBURN'S FORT WORTH: BRAHMS TO BRONCOS.

According to Leon Brachman, the Cliburn risks becoming too big for its own good. "What is its purpose? To enhance our life in Fort Worth? To provide a plaything for the jet-setters? To make a career for the winner?" So far, high society has not trampled the foundation's life-enhancing grass roots. But the Cliburn fails to obtain commensurate artistic returns on its multi-million-dollar investments. Some pianists are helped. Some are hurt. The crucial failure is obvious, at least to outsiders: the prime beneficiaries have never been gold medalists. Within the Cliburn community, this failure is blurred: close up, a very big prize looks better than a small one. But two years of hectic concert-giving did not catapult Steven De Groote, André-Michel Schub, or José Feghali into anything like a major career orbit.

THE Cliburn should move more decisively toward retiring its ballyhooed gold-medal itinerary. It was a naive inspiration to begin with, a Martha Hyder brainstorm based on happenstance. It burdens young pianists with unfulfillable expectations, and with fatiguing schedules preempting study, reflection, and personal growth. It propels them into venues they cannot be expected to command. The exaggerated praise it generates undermines what it uplifts.

Texas largess breeds a further confusion: that the "best" pianist will excel in concertos and chamber music, études and sonatas, in Bach, Mozart, Chopin, Tchaikovsky. The Cliburn's repertoire requirements are a tangled legacy of Irl Allison, Grace Ward Lankford, Martha Hyder, and Van Cliburn himself. As with so many of the competition's procedures, improvement has been deferred by turnover: a different chairman, a different executive director nearly every time. The Bach and Mozart requirements, especially, are unrealistic; and they penalize the very pianists the competition seeks for its Romantic concertos. Worse: repertoire requirements impinge on artistic prerogatives; a recitalist's program is the first potent statement he makes. For the Cliburn audience, free choice of solo repertoire would reduce the redundancy of ten *Chromatic* Fantasies and nine F minor Ballades, and the attendant focus on trivial disparities in interpretation.¹

In a 1989 article on music competitions, the guitarist Eliot Fisk wrote:

At a time when guitarists should be experimenting and seeking out new ideas in pedagogy, audience development, repertoire . . . competitions continue to behave as if these problems didn't exist. . . . One would think that new ideas might crop up at guitar competitions just as at trade conventions new technology confronts older methods. . . . Applicants are asked to prove basic competence . . . but they are not encouraged to seek out new and creative solutions to the critical problems facing the profession.

Pianists, too, face "critical problems": an unreplenished repertoire; a shrinking recital market. The Cliburn mainly addresses the piano's diminishing relevance with a single gesture: the commissioned American work. On balance, this gesture has proved disappointing. The disappointment is not merely that no Cliburn commission has notably enriched the contemporary literature; or even that the Cliburn invariably commissions composers from a dwindling conservative mainstream. The odds are poor that any new work will appeal to a majority of the contestants. A better strategy would be to require each pianist to perform the music of a living composer, and to instruct the jury to make this requirement matter. Instead of thirty-eight performances of *Chester*, the 1989 competition might have featured such potential high points as Alexander Shtarkman playing Schnittke, or Jean-Efflam Bavouzet's Stockhausen. Young pianists should be encouraged to program creatively. Many a featureless New York recital — a little of this, a little of that — can be traced to competition requirements that leave little time for exploring a personalized repertoire. This is one of several areas in which, beyond refining its mission, the Cliburn can undertake a constructive initiative.

"Competitions should include workshops, seminars or master classes, whenever possible," concludes a study by the European String Teachers Association. These, too, can speak to "critical problems facing the profession." The workshops and master classes of the TCU/Cliburn Competition Piano Institute, concurrent with the competition, receive as little attention as they deserve. The recitals, lectures, and classes of the William Kapell competition's "piano festival" are central events. At the 1989 Kapell festival, jurors Roman Vlad and Charles Rosen gave lecture-recitals on the piano music of Stravinsky and Elliot Carter; Carter himself was on hand. The Cliburn can do at least as well.

A final, more drastic revision would seal the logic of these first steps: the Cliburn should not rank its winners. Ranking is

false. It sends the wrong message: that artistic achievement is objectifiable, even quantifiable. "Burmester and Shtarkman — they are a world apart," says Philippe Bianconi. So are Alexei Sultanov and José Carlos Cocarelli; the thrill of their manufactured rivalry is as vulgar as the awards "countdown" with its envelopes for sixth, fifth, fourth, third, second, and first place. The idea of "number one" is perniciously seductive; we — and also the pianists, who are sometimes its worst victims — cannot help but think less of "number two." What jury can say who is "best"? No jury can — regardless of its esteemed membership or careful procedures. The jury's role must be understood.² Its judgment, however expert, is subjective. Its service is expedient, not omniscient. It does not reliably "screen" closely matched candidates to find number one. Rather, its verdict creates opportunities for certain pianists. A different jury would produce a different verdict; different pianists would be helped or hindered. What is more: on today's busy competition circuit, with far too many juror slots to fill, obtaining a strong field is much easier than obtaining a strong jury. In any competition, some pianists will play over the heads of some judges. All the more reason that, instead of ranking six finalists, the Cliburn jury should be instructed to choose up to six winners — who would emerge more nearly life-size, rather than bloated with an importance they had not possessed while merely playing.

According to its 1989 program booklet, the Cliburn is "a proven arena from which important careers have developed . . . a leading influence on the world of music." According to the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, "strong evidence" exists that the 1989 Cliburn field surpassed "the talent quotient of any other piano competition there has ever been, anywhere." According to subsequent Cliburn literature, the 1989 competition was "a uniquely momentous event" that "left its indelible mark." But if the Cliburn really does make Fort Worth "the center of the music world," its concerto round would utilize a suitable auditorium. It would seek a more stylish, more

challenging radio and television image. It would enjoy more privileged relations with the international piano community, promoting access to superior jurors and a jury chairman of more than local eminence. The competition's crowning provincialism, however, is the gold medal and its gaudy trappings. A slate of unranked winners would automatically discourage hyperbolic salesmanship and every other circus aspect.

Van Cliburn, in his speeches, prefers to think of the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition as a "festival." This false description is a true mandate. The final round should be a dignified showcase for gifted young performers — not a competition, but a festival of pianists and piano music.

Other American competitions and auditions handle prizes and programs more sensibly than the Cliburn does. Young Concert Artists and Affiliate Artists do not rank their winners or stipulate elaborate repertoire requirements; as managements, they aim more for modest than for major engagements. The Naumburg competition ranks its top three finishers only, and stipulates no repertoire. Stephen Hough, the remarkable 1983 winner, has enjoyed a smoother, more auspicious career ascent than any Cliburn medalist — thanks partly to Leventritt-style networking undertaken by Lucy and Robert Mann. As had the Leventritts and their circle, the Manns enjoy close contact with leading conductors and impresarios. For that matter, no competition has so proudly repudiated rankings, repertoire lists, or the big, public prize as did the Leventritt. Concomitantly, it repudiated anything like the Cliburn's popular base.

This concomitance summarizes the Cliburn competition's central dilemma. Every refinement of its artistic mission risks jeopardizing its public appeal and community support. Would audiences and sponsors reject unranked winners? Do they insist on the biggest possible prize? The most standardized repertoire? And there is a second constraint: the music business, itself popularized, itself craving one big winner playing the money concertos.

Ranking is false.

It sends the wrong message:

that artistic achievement

is objectifiable,

even quantifiable.

If its popular base is the Cliburn Foundation's outstanding achievement, the music business reduces the Cliburn to the status of symptom or victim. Gone are the days when a private audition or a New York debut could launch a career. Music businessmen find it safer and easier to exploit the young gladiator who comes trailing loud publicity and applause. As never before, they aim for the instant career, quickly begun, quickly expended. "Gifted beginners should not be harassed," Busoni once wrote. "They should give their fresh and promising gifts to the world before a chosen few; a spring festival of the art, a greeting to a bud just coming into bloom, the initiation of a youthful talent, a calm and cheerful ceremony." Even Van Cliburn's Moscow victory brought him fewer engagements than the Cliburn gold medal brought André-Michel Schub. The young Glenn Gould's busiest season was 1956–57, during which he performed forty-four times.

To what extent can the Cliburn competition transcend these popular and commercial pressures? Anthony Phillips, who administered the 1981 competition, regards the obligation to pick a single winner as "a necessary evil. . . . It seems to be the best, almost the only way in which people of influence in the horrible music business can be persuaded to listen to young performers who have not already

climbed onto the career ladder or have not made much way up it." Andrew Raeburn also prefers nonranked winners "in principle." "The problem is they would generate much less excitement — not only locally, but also abroad. Particularly for the presenters, the ranking is an important selling point." Richard Rodzinski agrees that ranking "can amount to choosing between apples and oranges" — yet remains mindful that "people want to have a winner." But Paul Pollei, whose Gina Bachauer competition relies on grass-roots support as much as the Cliburn does, is more sanguine about not ranking his six finalists. "It's an idea I've always found attractive. And it would be feasible if I had an unlimited budget. Our present first prize includes a grand piano. If we instead awarded its value in cash, then I would take that \$30,000 and do something different. Would it jeopardize our support base? I don't think so. We've always had strong local support. I know there are some people who see the competition as a horse race. But there are lots of others who reject that, who would welcome a less 'competitive' verdict."

If Pollei, with more piano competition experience than Anthony Phillips, Andrew Raeburn, and Richard Rodzinski put together, thinks he could sell unranked winners in Salt Lake City, the Cliburn must be selling itself short. Even the "horrible music business" supports this possibility. As the 1989 Cliburn competition shows, the leading orchestral managers, no longer willing to accept jury rankings, have stopped paying attention. A policy of unranked winners would bring them back. "What is needed is a platform for gifted young artists, before a general audience as well as the most prominent presenters, managers, and impresarios," says the Los Angeles Philharmonic's Ernest Fleischmann. "I think it would be extremely helpful to let the Cliburn pianists play the final round with the pressure of the competition behind them. And speaking for myself, I would be much more likely to engage someone I

Continued on page 67

The Ivory Trade
Continued from page 21

could hear without the intervention of a jury's verdict." The Chicago Symphony's Henry Fogel says: "I don't think ranking has any artistic validity whatsoever. I would be much more likely to make a commitment if I were given a choice of five or six winners. I'd be much more likely to find a talent I believed in."³

Fort Worth enjoys a serious and open-minded piano audience — one that is obviously ready for more contemporary music, that seizes the excitement of an unfamiliar work. And the Cliburn audience has for some time understood, and lamented, the fallibility of the jury. Raeburn himself remarks: "I'm a great believer that you can persuade people of almost anything if you don't wound their egos." Fort Worth egos can be made to appreciate that local claims to cultural sophistication are belied by the Cliburn's blatantly overvalued, overpromoted gold medal.

I belabor this possibility because the audience matters. Music in concert cannot exist without it. The audience stimulates or retards, gratifies or inhibits. As audiences change, so do concerts. Our American audiences are larger, more diverse, less sophisticated than European audiences of a century ago. At the Metropolitan Opera, a huge, complacent audience holds culture hostage to Franco Zeffirelli. In Fort Worth, a dynamic audience stirs with American optimism. It needs help.

The progression from the Leventritt competition to the Cliburn competition charts a sea change in American musical culture: the flourish and decline of an elite enclave; the sweeping ascendance of the populist ideal. This democratization of high culture is the central fact confronting all who arbitrate and debate the fate of classical music.

What used to be classical music is undoubtedly dead, and no amount of hand-wringing will bring it back. The term itself is already an anachronism, denoting a defunct precinct of high culture. Today's "classical music" is mainly a species of pretentious popular entertainment. Ostensibly raising mass culture, it razes high culture. It is "easy listening" radio stations whose programming strategies reduce Torelli and Mozart to a common denominator. It is Luciano Pavarotti at Madison Square Garden, bellowing Verdi and Puccini into a microphone for a bored, dutiful audience. It is too much music performed for too many people in spaces with too many seats: contradictions

MEADOWS SCHOOL OF THE ARTS ANNOUNCES THE APPOINTMENTS OF JOAQUIN ACHUCARRO AND EDUARD SCHMIEDER. TAKE NOTE.

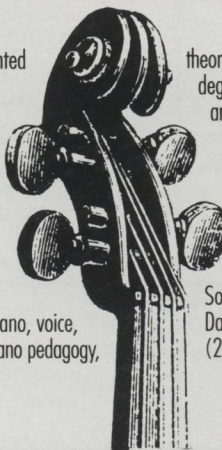
Joaquin Achucarro, Pianist, appointed to the Joel Estes Tate Chair in Piano. Eduard Schmieder, Violinist, appointed the Algur H. Meadows Professor of Violin and Chamber Music.

Meadows School of the Arts offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in: music education, music therapy, performance (orchestral instruments, piano, voice, guitar, organ and harpsichord), piano pedagogy,

theory and composition. Additional graduate degrees offered in conducting, music history and literature, and sacred music.

Faculty members include principals of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra.

For information write or call:
Meadows School of the Arts
Division of Music
Southern Methodist University
Dallas, Texas 75275-0356
(214) 692-2643



Helps Develop Finger Strength and Dexterity FINGERPOWER

Short, Progressive Technic Exercises

FREE SAMPLE — Circle the Level You Want:

Primer 1 2 3 4 5 6

for Teachers Only — LIMIT: One Book per Teacher

This Offer Expires February 28, 1991 — Clip This Ad and Send to:

SCHAUM PUBLICATIONS, INC.

Dept. MT — 10235 N. Port Washington Rd. — Mequon, WI 53092

Celebrating 25 years of artistic excellence.

Graduate, College and High School Programs
Summer Session: June 23-July 26, 1991

For more information, write or call:
Director of Admissions
North Carolina School of the Arts
P.O. Box 12189, 200 Woughtown St.
Winston-Salem, N.C. 27117-2189
(919) 770-3291 or 1-800-282-ARTS



North Carolina School of the Arts
School of Music

The North Carolina School of the Arts is an equal opportunity institution of The University of North Carolina.



NEW! VIDEANO PHASE TWO

Takes up where VIDEANO Phase One left off. A valuable teaching assistant for you and your pupils. Introduces students to music reading, rhythm, and hands on keyboard experience. This valuable tape can be used to supplement beginning lessons or as a review of the first six months study with a teacher.

Only \$39.95 plus \$3.50 S/H

VIDEANO Phase One

Basics of beginning keyboard.

**Only \$29.95 plus \$3.50 S/H or
both for \$57.00 plus \$3.50 S/H**

TEACHER'S PET PRODUCTIONS, INC.

P.O. Box 3783 • Spokane, WA 99202

1-800-326-7758

(509) 624-3448

UK

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Undergraduate Degrees

B.A. in Music

B.M. in Performance
and Music Education

Graduate Degrees

M.A. in Musicology
and Music Theory

M.M. in Performance,
Music Theory, Music
Education, and
Musicology

D.M.A. in Performance
and Composition

Ph.D in Musicology,
Music Education,
and Music Theory

For more information:
Office of Student Affairs
103 Fine Arts Building
Lexington, KY 40506-0022
606/257-8181

ultimately rationalized by marketing strategists adept at creating and maintaining artificial demand. It makes the present moment confused and ambiguous.

My friend Rados turns his back on "post-classical" music, and I understand. But there are other possible responses. There is the possibility of a liberating, post-modern eclecticism, smashing midcult's complacency, catalyzing a fusion audience; if we let him, Gidon Kremer may be the one to preside over classical music's rambunctious deconstruction. There is the possibility — in small, high-minded venues — of paring down the audience and of subordinating the performing stars; in New York, the 92nd Street Y's Schubertiade, with its concerts, master classes, lecture-performances, panels, films, and program essays, shows it can be done. There is the creative integration of new music, chamber music, and scholarship into the mainstream symphonic curriculum; the San Francisco Symphony, not so long ago, achieved something of this kind. Odd company for the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition — and yet Fort Worth, too, potentially hosts a meaningful holding action, fortified by a diversified agenda, a refreshed audience, and a capacity to experiment and change.

As a ballyhooed epitome of the popularization movement, the Cliburn wields enormous national influence. It sets standards. It shapes perceptions. I think it defers to the music businessmen more than it needs to. In the skewed world of post-classical music, we are so accustomed to the tail wagging the dog that we have forgotten that this violates the natural order of things.

The Cliburn's challenge is to fine-tune the trade-off between past ideals and present realities, between residual high culture and its democratic diffusion. Is it too late for the dog to wag its tail? Perhaps not. Perhaps.

AMT

NOTES

1. The Dublin International Piano Competition, new in 1988, stipulates no required repertoire (other than a commissioned work), so that competitors "may express their individuality." The Kapell competition dispensed with its solo repertoire requirements the same year. Paul Pollei of the Gina Bachauer competition will do away with them as of 1991. Pollei comments: "One thing that changed my mind was hearing Jorge Bolet, at the 1985 Cliburn, say 'I will never judge another competition. The pianists always have to play things they don't really know.' Competitions should show people off at their best." At the opposite extreme, Thomas Beczkiewicz, executive director of Indianapolis's International Violin Competition, misadvises prospective contestants: "Repertoire . . . offers one sure sign of a competition's level. If the repertoire is broad and complete in its requirements, surveying the highest achievement of the instrument's literature, the competition is serious; and if a significant part of the competition repertoire is already an active part of your own, you are probably on the right track." In an article for competitors, in the September 1989 *Musical America*, Beczkiewicz also advises that "serious" competitions have jurors "from every part of the world" and that "other than actually winning the gold, the most exhilarating part of the competition adventure is preparing for it." He warns against "idiosyncrasy" in performance, as well as "bizarre stage dress or behavior." Even losers can benefit from "a career reassessment that will eventually prove more valuable than any other discovery the competition brings to you." The Indianapolis is America's most prominent string competition.

2. No competition fosters misunderstanding as explicitly as the Bachauer; its elaborate "audience prizes" are for "audience members who most closely match the choices of the jury for each of the competition rounds."

3. The Queen Elisabeth competition gives gold medals to both its first- and its second-place finishers. The Rubinstein competition gives gold medals for first, second, and third place. But these are cosmetic touches; they do not influence public perceptions. A more meaningful innovation is at Spain's Santander International Piano Competition, which as of 1990 has dispensed with "numeric classifications" in favor of up to two "grand prizes," up to two "prizes of honor," and a "finalist prize."

From *The Ivory Trade* by Joseph Horowitz.
Copyright © 1990 by Joseph Horowitz.
Reprinted by permission of Summit Books/
Simon & Schuster, Inc.

MTNA Professional Resources

Developing An Effective Studio Brochure

Make sure your studio brochure is working *for* you and not against you. Find out how to create a winning brochure that best represents your professionalism and helps you accomplish your objectives. This handbook includes practical information on: determining your studio brochure's purpose, audience and content; writing copy for results; layout and design considerations; production and distribution. \$3.50 plus postage and handling. See the MTNA Publications advertisement elsewhere in this issue for ordering information.